

THE BLOOMFIELD CITIZEN.

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BLOOMFIELD, N. J., SATURDAY, MARCH 26, 1904.

PRICE FIVE CENTS.

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OPEN LETTER.

OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT OF
SCHOOLS, AND PRINCIPAL OF HIGH
SCHOOL.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE CITIZEN:

SIR: You have asked me to write plainly and fully my opinions regarding the influence of annexation upon the schools of this community. Other citizens, parents, and taxpayers by scores during the past over-heated days have asked my opinion. Matters of such extreme importance are not to be answered hastily. The very facts that I know to-day, from almost seven years experience here in the chief executive position, have made me very slow to give an opinion. So far the only opinion that I have yet expressed regarding annexation and all its side-issues are three: First, that the way in which annexation this time was brought before the people was extremely unfortunate for the cause itself, at the very start prejudicing such men as understand Americanism by ancestry or education. I understand that this may not have been done intentionally, but the fact stands. Second, that annexation would certainly destroy the school system, which does not necessarily mean that it would injure the education of the children in the schools. And third, that annexation would certainly be defeated. I have seen no cause yet to change any of these opinions.

For itself I care nothing about the school system of the Town of Bloomfield; it is merely a means to an end. Schools do not exist to make positions for anybody or to pay salaries to anybody. Schools do not exist even for the sake of the children and youth in them or for their parents. They exist solely for the welfare of the humanity that is to be, for the community of the future, for the nation to which we owe our allegiance. A school exists to preserve what is good in human life, and to help humanity forward upon its journey. A school is dedicated to progress.

I am not in the least disturbed about the welfare of the teachers. There are very few persons upon the educational pay roll of this Town who will not be able to get next Fall at least as good positions elsewhere as they hold here. The Bloomfield teachers have been selected, under the rules and practices of the Board of Education, with unusual care, and their services are in demand elsewhere. With but eight exceptions, among sixty-eight day teachers, all can go into the Newark system for equal or greater salaries and in equal or better positions. Of the eight exceptions, one would get a higher salary but a lower grade position, another would get the same salary but a very different position.

After ten days' diligent inquiry, and by some seven years of knowledge of both Newark and Bloomfield, I enter hereby upon the public records an opinion that, on the whole, the positions of the teachers would be considerably benefited by annexation to Newark, where the salaries range to maximums in the classrooms twice as high as those paid here. Further, I believe that the larger sums of money available for personal and professional expenses would enable them to teach better, and would give this community a more permanent body of teachers. I doubt very much, however, whether even a majority of the present Bloomfield teachers would be willing to remain here under the jurisdiction of Newark. Already many have notified me to the contrary. They would prefer to go to the Oranges, Montclair, or New York.

With all these provisos and disclaimers I am now ready to discuss the question itself. ON THE TWO SCHOOL ISSUES, FINANCIAL AND EDUCATIONAL, OUGHT BLOOMFIELD TO DESIRE TO BECOME A PART OF THE GREAT CITY OF NEWARK? I propose to set forth both sides of the controversy, so far as I am able to see them.

The Bloomfield school system as it stands derives forty per cent. of its funds from the State, and sixty per cent. (more or less on the average) from the Town. This means that when \$60,000 is spent in a given year, the State is paying about \$24,000 and the Town about \$36,000. If the enrollment in such a year is 2,300, the per capita cost is about \$27, of which the State pays about \$11 and the Town about \$16. I present here a concrete example.

ordinary year is usually about 7,000. This is a typical class of average size with an elementary teacher on average salary. For the teacher the Town receives \$200; for the day's attendance at 4 cents a day, the Town receives \$280. If the Town did not need to provide a building, a janitor, principal, in part paid for by the State, a corps of supervisors to show the \$525 teachers how to do the practical work, books, coal and supplies, the total net cost to the Town of that room would be only \$45. In order to display all these matters, I will take the same School, No. 8, and deal with it as a unit.

Costs.
Instructors' and janitor's salaries, \$3,300
Coal, etc., 500
Books and all supplies, 1,500
One-sixth part salaries of all specialists and supervisors, 1,000

STATE RECEIPTS.
For instructors, \$1,800
For days' attendance, 2,000
For share in allowance for specialists and supervisors, 500
For share in manual training supplies, 300

Net cost of School No. 8 to Bloomfield \$4,200.

Similar statistics might be prepared for any other school. The foregoing figures are not those that happen to apply only this year, but represent a fair average for several years in the five schools, Nos. 2, 3, 4, 7 and 8. The other two schools Nos. 1 and 6, present a heavier per capita cost and are therefore not typical. They have in all only ten per cent. of our school population and represent special cases.

I do not deal with the question of bonds and interest because the condition here is not in the least typical. In Massachusetts all buildings are paid for when built. Both principal and interest are being steadily reduced by the wise action of the old Boards of Education. Newark would have to add them to her levy. Now I have presented the foregoing statistics in order that I might lay before reasonable and thoughtful men the facts regarding the children in the homes that the blessed and very desirable Building and Loan Associations are building here and helping poor men to buy. The children of most of the people who live in the less costly homes of this Town of eleven thousand people are young and go to the primary and grammar grade classes. As I have shown above, the cost in such a School as No. 8, is more than half paid by the State. The per capita cost in that particular school seems to be about \$24 annually; the State pays its share, \$4,000, pays per capita \$13.50, and the Town paying its share, \$4,200, pays \$11.50. Consequently, a family with two children at school at one time, and paying taxes upon a house valued by the assessors at \$900, is not bringing severe financial ruin upon the Town.

Next, let me take up the question of the so-called County tax. School tax is properly styled the State School tax. Throughout New Jersey upon all property there is levied a tax of \$2.75 per \$1,000. This would produce in Bloomfield some \$14,000, but the State reduces this amount by a grant from the corporation tax of about \$1,000,000 annually, so that the amount of State school tax actually paid by Bloomfield is about \$8,000 more or less. This is not returned to Bloomfield in any sense whatever. It is payable whether there are no children or 10,000 children here. The State upon the basis of teachers, superintendent, library, days' attendance, and manual training, pays to us the above-stated \$24,000 and \$2500, and \$70 for special accounts.

I have heard it said that all the school tax the poor man pays is the 80 points, and that he gets back for two children some \$60 worth of education. (The schools do not actually get 80 points, but only 74 points, the balance going to the Town's incidental account.) Neither of the foregoing statements is borne out by the above figures. Of his tax of \$27 or thereabout, he actually pays some \$12 to school purposes, and the day's attendance of his children earns about \$10 or \$12 more. Beside that there is justly chargeable to his credit one-fourth of the State's share of the salaries of two teachers, that is, \$10 more, because forty of such families require the Town and State to employ two teachers. Now the account with the poor house-owner, when the Building and Loan co-operation plan is enabling to get upon their financial feet is really as follows, viz:

Cost of the schooling of two children in an elementary school, \$46
Pays in school taxes, State and Town, \$12
Days' attendance earns, 10
Share in State payment of teachers' salaries, 10
Share in State payment of supervisors' salaries, 1

Actual cash loss to wealthier persons in the Town of Bloomfield, \$13

The foregoing figures ignore the State's share in paying certain costs of supplies and apply to the \$900 valuation. For a \$600 valuation reduce the receipts by \$4. For a \$1,300 valuation increase them by \$4. I desire particularly to call the attention of the students of municipal finance to the fact that the average per family valuation of property here seems to be not \$600, or \$900, but some \$2,000. I might also take up the case of the Catholic families, and of the families without children now in the public schools. It is my impression that some exceedingly interesting facts could be developed.

It is hard work to prepare a long account of statistics such as this, but it is harder to read it; and I trust that the patience of the readers will hold out until I have developed all the essential principles involved, both in the finance and in the education of the schools. It is hoped that annexation to Newark, were it to take place, would reduce the school tax. Undoubtedly it would until Newark discovered the following state of affairs:

From Bloomfield's tax rate and property valuation, \$87,500
From Newark's tax rate and Bloomfield's property valuation, \$23,000
From the State for Bloomfield's teachers and supervisors, etc., 16,000
From the State for Newark's teachers, etc., 12,000
To Bloomfield's teachers, etc., 67,000
To Newark's teachers, etc., 12,000
All of the foregoing figures I have continued on page 3.

Anti-Annexation Literature.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE CITIZEN:

SIR: Your columns last week certainly contained a generous measure of anti-annexation literature, which I read very carefully with the desire to learn what arguments there were to be offered on that side of the question which had perhaps escaped my attention. No consideration, however, was presented, based on facts as they actually exist, that had not already been duly weighed by those favoring annexation. Some of the arguments offered were based on false premises, presumably because the writers were misinformed as to the facts.

There were two features strikingly characteristic of these communications. First, they were with one exception, all anonymous, and it seems strange that there should have been such a general hesitation to back up the views expressed, by open acknowledgment of authorship. A second characteristic was the abundance of personalities, insinuations, imputations of unworthy motives, misrepresentations as to facts, questions of the consistency of individuals, etc., etc., none of which are arguments, and all of which are entirely irrelevant to the question before the people of Bloomfield.

It is a question of present facts and conditions, of impending problems, and the best way to meet them. If there is a better practicable solution than annexation, I would gladly welcome it. I would gladly state it if they have such, in clear and definite terms with full information that it may be weighed alongside of the advantages of annexation. Certainly there was nothing of that character in last week's CITIZEN.

We admit sentimental reasons are against annexation and for a long time the undersigned, although his judgment was convinced, stood out against annexation simply because of his regard for old Bloomfield, and a dislike of losing our independence. Sentiment is a real thing and entitled to some weight, but after all it presents only a minor argument and should not be allowed to blind us to larger and stronger considerations.

Let every man decide dispassionately, irrespective of personal prejudices, resentments or other irrelevant considerations, what will be to the benefit of Bloomfield and vote accordingly, whether it be for or against annexation. That is what the undersigned proposes to do and hopes every other citizen will do the same. If on dispassionate and careful thought any voter concludes that poor water, a larger bonded debt, higher taxes, and a constant financial struggle with independence, are preferable to their opposites with annexation, then by all means vote against annexation.

But, Mr. Editor, I did not set out to argue the question of the desirability of annexation or the opposite. If the bill authorizing this step is passed, there will be meetings called and opportunity afforded for careful comparison of the pros and cons.

Whatever motives may move individuals in their advocacy of or opposition to this measure, it is certainly true that there was no "politics" in the inception of this movement, nor is there now so far as those who took the initiative are concerned. It was instituted simply as a move for the best interests of the people of Bloomfield, irrespective of political considerations, and what we now desire is that the matter be carefully considered and a decision reached by the people on the real merits of the case.

Just one thing more. It is impossible to attempt to deny all the mis-statements made in the numerous communications in your last issue, but there is one I would like to deny and that is that there has been an "effort to demonstrate that the Essex County Building and Loan Association is a detriment to the town." There has been no such effort made. I am a great admirer of both the Essex County and the Bloomfield Building and Loan Associations, or any other agency which aids every man to own his home, and am bitterly opposed to tenement houses or the compact rows of little bare cheerless factory houses in which so often workmen and their families are compelled to live. It is a great aid in a lifting character and working man to own his home and have an interest in making it comfortable and attractive. Any organization working to these ends as the Essex County Building and Loan Association does, has my unqualified approval.

What was said, and which was distorted into enmity, to a small house, merely pointing out a condition which exists and which explains Bloomfield's high tax rate now and probable still higher tax rate for the future, viz: that the amount of unimproved property in Bloomfield which is attractive to builders of high priced houses is very small indeed, and that therefore the large majority of houses to be built here will be comparatively inexpensive; that such houses necessarily produce less income than more valuable property, while the expense for some things, especially education is larger because of the larger number of families, and more numerous school children. This condition was cited not to deplore it, but merely as the explanation why Bloomfield cannot run its government on existing lines with as low a tax rate as some neighboring municipalities where there is and will be a much larger proportion of high priced properties. In other words, the increase of our expenses is out of proportion to the increase of our income.

Newark on the other hand can handle the situation successfully, because first, economies will be secured through annexation in the cost of water and elimination of many expenses of our local government in form of salaries, rents, etc., etc., and second because of the heavy taxes paid by corporations, valuable buildings, franchises, etc. For instance, I am told that the Mutual Benefit Life Insurance Company alone pays a tax equal to that of the whole

town of Bloomfield, (part of it to the State—not the city,) and that is but one of many large corporations paying heavy taxes and making a very low rate practicable. D. G. GARABANT.

Street Improvements.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE CITIZEN:

SIR: Some of your correspondents seem to overlook the fact that there is no difference between Bloomfield and Newark as they now are, independent municipalities, in the matter of paying for street and other improvements.

At the last Board of Trade meeting one gentleman said that there was no doubt that we could get street improvements if we went into Newark, but that we would have to pay for them, and that he had just paid an assessment of \$300. The inference was that it would have been different if his property had been located in Bloomfield. The fact is, owners of property will have to pay for street improvements whether we are annexed to Newark or not. There is absolutely no difference in that respect between Bloomfield and Newark.

While Bloomfield was a township money could be raised for street improvements by a general tax, or by an issue of bonds. Since Bloomfield has been incorporated as a town the cost of all such improvements must be paid by the owners of adjacent property.

Bloomfield did an eminently wise thing when several years ago, before incorporation, she macadamized all of her streets. Had this not been done then it would have doomed us to mud roads for many years, for, when the cost of street improvements is assessed directly upon the property, it is very difficult to secure the harmony of action necessary to accomplish the improvement. This is largely the secret of the miserable condition of the Woodside streets. If our roads were not macadamized it would be a serious objection to annexation, or even to incorporation.

The criticisms passed upon cities for the mud roads usually characteristic of their suburbs are not altogether just. This condition of streets is mainly chargeable to those districts themselves, either because they did not put them in good condition before annexation, or because, although within the city limits, they have not called upon the authorities to put them in order at the expense of the property-owners.

Even if Bloomfield remains independent we shall gradually accumulate an assortment of dirt roads with a depth of mud equal to any elsewhere, unless the property-owners are willing to pay for their betterment.

THEODORE H. WARD.

A Woman's Reasoning.
TO THE EDITOR OF THE CITIZEN:

SIR: I am not sure as to whether you would permit a woman to express her views upon annexation in your valued columns or not. In your issue of last Saturday you made the invitation so general inviting discussion that I think you will permit one to say something upon a question which appeals to wives and mothers. Surely the snares that are set for our loved ones in Newark are bad enough now. Surely our cup of sorrow gets filled a good many times now when a journey in a trolley car has to be taken. What would it be with Newark Sunday laws in good, quiet Bloomfield? Did you ever get a look into a saloon on Sunday in Newark? I did, and I am sure I don't want any such sights in our township. This question is of such serious import that it seems to me it should appeal to the pulpits and the voices of our beloved pastors should be raised up against the gross wickedness that will surely pervade ever our domain if we become a part of Newark. I appeal to mothers and wives who believe in the sanctity of home life to unite on such measures as will save us from such an evil. May the day never come when we shall ever be a part of Newark, is the prayer of a MOTHER.

Newark's Growing Tax Rate.

The following table shows the relative tax rates for the past ten years in Newark and its must be borne in mind that the rate does not include social assessments for sewers, curbs, sidewalks paved or asphalt streets and other things that are paid for by city property-owners over and above the general tax:

1894.....\$1.36
1895.....1.36
1896.....1.36
1897.....1.36
1898.....2.10
1899.....2.12
1900.....2.14
1901.....2.14
1902.....2.14
1903.....2.14
1904 (estimated).....2.50

Will Follow Annexation.

Newark sporting capitalists are holding in abeyance a scheme for an amusement park in this town and it will be put into operation as soon as annexation to Newark is a fact. The scheme is to make a beer garden and dancing pavilion of Glenwood Park, and to have Sunday base-ball there. Katz, the brewer, now controls the property and is anxious to turn it to profitable use. There are good business prospects for Sunday base-ball here. Good games by good teams would draw hundreds of people from this town, Montclair and the Oranges every Sunday, and the portion of Glenwood avenue in the vicinity of the park, which is now dull and deadlike, would present an animated appearance on Sundays. The Oranges and Passaic Valley Railroad would reap a financial harvest on Sundays from the project. Perhaps the only objectionable feature of the scheme would be the evening dances in the park on account of the disreputable women who would be attracted to the place, and some of whom may locate and carry on their nefarious business in that locality. Of course the residential value of property within a wide scope surrounding the park will be destroyed. Under home rule the local authorities have been able to prohibit Sunday base-ball in this town. Beer gardens are not profitable on account of the strict regulations in force, and there is not a house of prostitution in the town. Newark permits and encourages Sunday base-ball and other Sunday amusements. Newark only places nominal restrictions on Sunday beer gardens, and those who frequent houses of ill-fame testify that Newark is worse than New York in that respect of wickedness. Mayor Doremus, it is said, promised Mr. Garabrant many good things for Bloomfield if Mr. Garabrant could induce the people to vote for annexation, but everybody knows that Mayor Doremus may promise much, but can deliver nothing; but this thing is certain, Mayor Doremus cannot or will not stop Sunday base-ball in Newark, or close the season back door or close the houses of ill-fame, and it is equally certain that this town will get a full share of Newark's vices and that Mayor Doremus will take no steps to check it.

The Glenwood avenue park scheme, which is ready to be put in effect as soon as annexation is assured, forswears Bloomfielders may expect from Newark rule.

Joseph Crowell Morris.

The funeral services of Joseph Crowell Morris, who died on Saturday last, were held in the First Presbyterian Church on Monday afternoon, and were conducted by Rev. George L. Curtis. There was a large attendance, many being friends and relatives from Newark and New York. A brief service was first held at the late residence of deceased on Park avenue, where prayer was offered by Rev. Dr. James M. Ludlow of East Orange. This was attended by the immediate relatives and the officers of the church, in which Mr. Morris had served as elder since 1888. Closely identified with the social and religious life of this town, and held in loving esteem by all, Mr. Morris's passing away is deplored throughout the community by young and old, rich and poor, each of whom was anxious to tender expressions of sympathy and regret to those who are so sadly bereaved.

Mr. Morris had been for the last twenty years interested in the carpet business in New York city. Born in Bloomfield in 1838, he was a lineal descendant of Thomas Morris, who came from England to Boston in 1637, and settled in the same year at New Haven, Conn. He was also a descendant of Captain John Morris, ancestor of the family in Bloomfield. On his mother's side he was a great-grandson of Rev. Stephen Grover, the first pastor of the Caldwell Presbyterian Church. He was the last of the grandsons of Stephen Morris to bear the family name; also the last survivor in his immediate family of his generation. He leaves a widow, who is the daughter of the late Abram Walker, and an only child, the wife of Dr. Wm. E. Broughton.

Death of George Riker.

George Riker, aged 86 years, died at his home, No. 78 Washington street, Sunday night. Mr. Riker had been ill about four weeks, and his death was the result of a general breaking down of his system due to his advanced age. Mr. Riker was born in this town, and was held in high esteem by a large circle of friends.

Mr. Riker was an architect and builder, and was well known to the building trade. In the course of his career he built many churches in all parts of the country. Among them are the St. James Church, New London, Conn.; St. Paul's Church, Trinity Chapel, New York city; Madison Square, New York; Unitarian Church, Twentieth street and Fourth avenue, New York; St. Vincent de Paul's, Twenty-third street, Manhattan; St. Peter's, Albany, N. Y.; St. Stephen's Church, Providence, R. I.; Cranston Street Baptist Church, Providence, R. I.; St. Augustine's Chapel, New York; St. Thomas, Fifth avenue, New York; St. James, Taunton, Mass.; St. Paul's, Brooklyn, N. Y.; St. Vincent Chapel and Academy, Yonkers, N. Y., and St. Lawrence's, Portland, Me.

Mr. Riker built the Bloomfield National Bank, and also a large number of private residences in all parts of this and other States.

QUESTIONS OF VERACITY.

CONFLICTING VERSIONS ABOUT THE
"STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL" MEETING.

Was a Referendum Wanted or was it Not?—One Party Says It was, the Other Says It was Not—Which Side Tells the Truth.

How the present movement for annexation of this town to Newark started is a matter about which it is difficult to ascertain the truth. People who were present at the meeting at which the step was taken to apply to the Legislature for an annexation bill flatly contradict one another in their version of what took place, and it is evident that some one is not telling the truth. One side contends that there was no intention of passing a bill without a referendum; the other side contends that the majority deliberately and purposely voted down a referendum proposition. Under ordinary circumstances there would probably be as much reason for believing one side to this controversy as the other, and attribute the dispute as a misunderstanding, but there is another circumstance in connection with the meeting that strengthens the position of the minority as to the truthfulness of their version of the affair. This circumstance is there was a deceptive coloring, given to the movement in its inception. Several of those who were invited to the meeting of Friday evening, March 11, were totally ignorant of the fact that the annexation question was to be broached at the meeting. The popular impression was that the subject of consultation was to be candidates for town offices. The invitation read as follows:

BLOOMFIELD, N. J., March 4, 1904.
You are invited to attend a conference of REPRESENTATIVE citizens from different sections of our town, to be held in rooms of Bloomfield B. and L. Association, at 8 P. M., Friday, March 11. It is proposed to consider matters pertaining to the best interests of our community. Will you kindly consider this invitation, and the fact that there is to be such a conference strictly confidential? (Signed) THOMAS OAKES, Committee.

The representatives of First Ward are requested to meet at residence of Theo. H. Ward for preliminary consultation on Monday evening, March 7, at 8 o'clock. D. G. GARABANT.

The preliminary meeting at Mr. Theodore Ward's home resulted in the selection of John A. Lawrence for candidate for Councilman-at-Large and James H. Moore for Councilman. Mr. Moore disapproved, and also said that he felt assured that Mr. Lawrence would not accept a nomination.

Mr. Garabrant said that he had assurances that if pressure was brought to bear upon Mr. Lawrence from the right sources he would accept. The meeting adjourned with the understanding that the names of Messrs. Lawrence and Moore would be presented at Friday night's meeting.

When that meeting assembled Mr. Lawrence flatly refused to be a candidate, and Mr. Moore declined also.

"Then," exclaimed Mr. Garabrant, "there is nothing else left but annexation to Newark." Greatly to the surprise and consternation of many present the annexation movement was sprung. Some advocated it, some opposed it, and others were silent. The opponents contended for a referendum, and it was voted down by a vote of 13 to 6.

Another deceptive feature of the meeting was the pains taken to pack it with a majority attendance of those known to have at one time been favorable to annexation.

Considered from every standpoint the version of the meeting given by those who opposed an annexation bill without a referendum, appears to be the truthful version.

The special meeting of the Board of Trade on Thursday evening, March 17, was only a bit of side-play to enable the people who had opposed the referendum to get on record on the other side, in order to blay public indignation over the attempt to force annexation without a referendum.

A Short Session.

The Town Council held one of the shortest sessions on record on Monday night. The Committee on Parks was instructed to have the trees in the parks trimmed and the public grounds put in good condition.

Town Treasurer Harry L. Osborne reported that the financial condition of the town was excellent and better than it had been for years. There was a balance of \$2,000 in the treasury. Councilman Farrand said he hoped to be able to make a report on the matters at the next meeting.

Birthday Surprise.

Mrs. William J. Raab was tendered a pleasant surprise on Thursday by her children and grandchildren in celebration of her sixty-fifth birthday.

PROTECT your securities and valuable papers against FIRE and BURGLARS by sending a box to the Safe Deposit Vaults of The Bloomfield National Bank. Boxes to rent at \$1.00 per year and upwards.—Advt.

